

# **East/West Corridor**

at Smithfield Town Hall

June 2, 2003 from 6:30pm to 9:00pm

Approximately 20 residents from the East/West Corridor were present at the public workshop on June 2, 2003 in Smithfield Town Hall. The cities and towns represented at the meeting were: Gloucester, East Greenwich, East Providence, Providence and Smithfield.

## **Workshop Participants**

- 5 had lived in the corridor more than 20 years
- 2 had lived in the corridor 15-20 years
- 4 had lived in the corridor 10-15 years
- 3 had lived in the corridor 5-10 years
- 3 had lived in the corridor less than 3 years

## **Corridor Municipalities**

- |              |                    |
|--------------|--------------------|
| • Cranston   | • North Providence |
| • Foster     | • Providence       |
| • Gloucester | • Scituate         |
| • Johnston   | • Smithfield       |

## **Major Roads of the Corridor**

- Route 44
- Route 6
- Route 14
- Route 12

## **Using the Corridor Roads**

Of those who commuted their modes of transportation for work were:

- 15 Automobile
- 1 Bus
- 1 Bike

The one person who stated he used public transportation for his commute to work, lived in the East Side section of Providence and commuted to Pawtucket.

## **Positive Features of the Corridor**

Asked about how the roads benefited the attendant's lifestyle, how they used the roads and some of the positive features that their corridor provided them.

- A means to get to work
- Provides a comfortable commute compared to others commuting the same distance but from other corridors
- Less traffic during rush hour
- Historic rural character of corridor with small villages

- Potential for bike paths in Burrillville, North Smithfield, and Glocester
- Bike path along Woonasquatucket connects to Corridor

The benefits of the corridor including its 'slow country lifestyle' contributed to why the residents lived in the area. There is a historic character to the area and a general good quality of life among the towns and villages. The quality education systems and a less congested commute to surrounding metropolitan areas were also reasons why residents continued to live in the area or moved into the corridor. There are many villages in the corridor including, Esmond, Greenville, Spragueville, Harmony, Centerdale, Georgiaville, Stillwater, Hopkins Mills, Scituate, North Scituate, Chepachet and Smithfield. Residents also agreed that the area is easily accessible to many points of interest, recreation, Warwick airport and employment.

The residents enjoyed being able to have a fast commute to work to such places as Boston, Worcester and Providence while still living in a rural area. Comparing their commute to that of their colleagues, East/West corridor residents enjoyed their time on the roads, had less congestion with faster commutes than others who drove the same distance, but in different corridors.

### **Issues with the Corridor**

As much as residents expressed the benefits in their more rural corridor, they expressed concern about safety, public transportation availability, congestion, sprawl and potential development in their corridor.

#### **Traffic/Congestion/Access Management/Safety**

As much as residents enjoyed their commute to work and compared to other corridors they had quicker commute times, they have been experiencing more congestion and issues with traffic as the area increases in population. Participants of the workshop expressed concern about speeds on corridor roads, pedestrian safety on streets and crossing intersections, very few "walkable" areas with sidewalks and lack of street sweeping that causes safety issues for bicyclists.

##### **Route 6**

- Johnston to Route 102 in Scituate
- Route 6 to Route 10 into Providence (at the interchange)
- Commonly referred to as 'suicide alley '
- Traffic light at Route 94 and Route 6 intersection, near an elementary school, has no traffic light to help pedestrians cross the street safely

##### **Route 44**

- Congested, especially from Providence to Apple Valley to the Village of Harmony
- Heavy traffic
- Traffic backs into the Village of Esmond
- Issues with mall traffic backing into flowing traffic lanes

##### **Route 7**

- Mineral Spring and Douglas Avenue intersection needs review
- Not bike friendly

## Land Use/Sprawl

Residents expressed concern about the potential for development in their corridor and had concerns about congestion, land use, sprawl and aesthetics. Condominiums in North Providence have created congestion on roads. Lower density is preferable where infrastructure does not exist to accommodate higher density.

- Sprawl examples are Bryant/Fidelity/Dow developed after Route I-295.

## Route 6

- In Johnston there has been too much commercial development, possibly induced by the Route 295 interchange

## Centerdale Village

- The village rotary paved over landscaping improvements and is unattractive

## Transit

- RIPTA has limited bus service to the area because there is not enough density to support better service
- The more flexible Ride system of RIPTA has limited availability to area residents in need of its service
- Too few public transit options for general public and elderly. Elderly and disabled persons can become isolated in the corridor with limited public transportation options and few walkable areas

## Issues Identified by Participants at End of Session

At the conclusion of the visioning session, participants were presented with a list of issues and asked to prioritize them. The following chart represents their priorities.

